

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE BROWN COUNTY
VETERANS' RECOGNITION SUBCOMMITTEE**

Pursuant to Section 19.84, Wis. Stats., a regular meeting of the **Brown County Veterans' Recognition Subcommittee** was held on Tuesday, September 20, 2016 at 4:30 p.m. in Room 201 of the Northern Building, 305 E. Walnut Street, Green Bay, Wisconsin.

PRESENT: Chair Erickson, Carl Soderberg, Ed Koslowski, Duane Pierce, Jim Haskins, Louise Dahlke, Joe Witkowski

EXCUSED: Tracy Rosinski, Delores Pierce, Jerry Polus

****Running Total of Veterans' Certificates: 1777**

1. **Call Meeting to Order.**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Bernie Erickson at 4:30 pm.

2. **Invocation.**

3. **Approve/Modify Agenda.**

Motion made by Jim Haskins, seconded by Ed Koslowski to approve. Vote taken. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

4. **Approve/Modify Minutes of August 16, 2016.**

Motion made by Duane Pierce, seconded by Ed Koslowski to approve. Vote taken. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

5. **Update re: Honor Rewards Program.**

Chair Bernie Erickson informed that he recently showed his Honor Rewards card at Home Depot and received a discount.

Register of Deeds Cathy Williquette informed that as of today there are 80 businesses signed up for the program. The most-recent to sign up are Cooks Corner, Cabelas, IHop, Happy Joes, Western Racquet and Pizza Ranch. There have been 178 requests for cards to date. Of those, 3 have been denied because they were not from Brown County residents, 15 are in the approval stage and 160 have been sent out.

Williquette also said one of her employees was at the Honor Run at City Stadium recently and Williquette also went and there were a few people that showed interest and some signed up. Overall the program is going well and she said the vendor who runs the program will allow any county to participate in the program, even if they do not buy the software. Williquette has arranged for a representative of the company to go to the Veterans Conference in October to present this to the Veterans Service Officers. She said she has had inquiries about the program from several surrounding counties and she would like to see this program offered throughout the state.

6. **Update re: 2016 Veterans' Appreciation Day at the Brown County Fair.**

Jim Haskins said he and Jerry Polus were approached by someone at the Fair who asked what group will be honored next year. They tossed around a few ideas and suggested something like "women left behind" to honor the wives of veterans and womens' auxiliary members. Ed Koslowski said the other suggestion he heard was to honor Purple Heart recipients. Louise Dahlke said that the auxiliaries now include men so this would have to be nailed down a little bit. These suggestions were noted and will be discussed further as next year's event approaches.

Duane Pierce said that considering the weather, the event went fairly well. Erickson estimated that about 50 people attended the ceremony. Koslowski asked how many tickets were turned in and Dahlke responded that not many were turned in. Next year she would like to keep track of the number of raffle tickets given out and then she would double that number to estimate attendance. This would make things easier for the Fair to keep track of numbers. Koslowski said that 124 raffle tickets were handed out this year. Soderberg asked if there were many people that came but did not have a ticket. Dahlke responded that there were a number who showed IDs to get in instead of having a ticket. She questioned if the Subcommittee really needs to go through the expense of having tickets printed because it seems that not that many are turned in. She felt if word could get out that veterans could get in with a veterans ID, the ticket procedure could be eliminated. When veterans are let in without a ticket, it is difficult for the Fair to keep track of the number of attendees. Dahlke estimated that more than half of the people at the event did not turn their ticket in. This will be discussed again before next year's event so a decision can be made as to how to handle this.

Koslowski would like a thank you note sent to the Fair Board for their help with the event and also to Preble FFA for the boutonnieres they handed out to veterans. Also thank you notes should be sent to Heartland Hospice and Humana for their support of the event. Erickson said he has already sent thank you notes to the businesses who donated prizes.

7. Report from CVSO Jerry Polus.

CVSO Jerry Polus was not in attendance at the meeting. A letter from him was read to the group that explained his absence. Polus is hopeful to be back for the next meeting. Erickson also noted that Polus has requested some sort of poster listing the various events going on for Veterans Day. Pierce and Koslowski will get the information together so a poster can be made.

8. Comments from Carl Soderberg.

Soderberg informed that they are still waiting for the Senate and House to get together for NDAA (National Defense Authorization Act) which is basically the military and veterans budget. The House and Senate passed different versions and have not been able to determine how to reconcile the differences. Soderberg continued that the two things they hear most about are the veterans' choice card and the long delay in appeals and putting in the first claim for benefits.

9. Report from Committee Members Present (Erickson, Dahlke, Haskins, Koslowski, Pierce, Rosinski & Witkowski).

-Erickson reported that he had some Honor Rewards signs made for his boat and he shared pictures of them on the boat.

-Louise Dahlke did not have anything to add other than what she brought up earlier.

-Jim Haskins informed he got his invitation from the Yacht Club for their Veterans Day event. He also said he attended the booyah bash at the Vets Center on Ashland Avenue recently and it was well attended. He also mentioned that he had seen an article in the paper that John Maino would be at a book signing in Oconto Falls which was being sponsored by Oconto County and the Oconto County Library. Haskins continued that he recently learned that the person who designed the POW flag used his son's silhouette on the flag. Haskins ended his report by saying that he had recently received his Honor Rewards card.

-Ed Koslowski noted that AMVETS will be holding a meat raffle at Pearly Gates on November 8. Proceeds will be used to help veterans in Brown County.

-Duane Pierce reported that on October 3 the Vietnam veterans will hold their quarterly get together at Pearly Gates. There will be raffles, food specials, etc. beginning at 5:00 pm. Pierce said this is a fun event and all are welcome. He also reported that the annual POW/MIA candlelight recognition ceremony was held at the courthouse on September 16. They had the honor of retiring another name and the list is now down to 26 soldiers missing from Wisconsin. He was happy that Channel 2 provided some media coverage for the event.

-Witkowski shared a historical article from the newspaper regarding building the new City Hall in 1951. He also shared an article that says the Desert Vets of Wisconsin based in the Green Bay area are offering veterans

appreciation hunts this fall. The nonprofit organization is teaming with local veterans and land owners to offer a day of duck or goose hunting free to all active service members or honorably discharged veterans. Witkowski also shared an article regarding firing squads being provided by local veterans' organization in 1947 for military rights in connection with the reburial of Green Bay war dead from foreign cemeteries.

Witkowski also mentioned the Veterans Day breakfast this group has taken part in in the past. He said if the event is as hectic as it has been in the past, he would suggest that this group not be involved. He suggested this group still collect door prizes to use throughout the year at different events. He felt that only about half of the people should be allowed in the breakfast to make things run more smoothly. Haskins did not think the event was too hectic and Koslowski added the only part he thought was hectic was distributing the prizes. Witkowski said if we do participate in the event, we should only give part of the prizes there and save the rest for other events throughout the year, or give them to Polus so he can have them available in his office to give out at his discretion. Haskins did not think that businesses would be happy if we collected prizes but did not give them out at the event. Witkowski reiterated he felt the event was hectic and it would be easier to get around if less people were admitted.

Erickson recalled discussing in the past about the Subcommittee not being involved in the VFW event but asking the Yacht Club if this group could become part of their event instead, however, nothing was ever finalized. He also noted that the Subcommittee is smaller than it has been in the past and also that it is now quite late to start soliciting for door prizes. Witkowski said he was going to suggest that we start collecting prizes after the next meeting. Erickson did not feel we need to do any solicitations for Veterans Day because we do the door prizes at the Fair. Pierce and Haskins both felt that we should not plan on participating in the VFW event this year. Koslowski said everyone expects the article in the paper that lists the Veterans Day activities and offers. Witkowski said that he would like a copy of the newspaper article if anyone has one.

Erickson recalled earlier discussions where it was indicated that we now have the Honor Rewards program that runs year round. He said if this group really wanted to do something, they should set up a table at the Veterans Day event to sign up members for Honor Rewards so they can get the offers and discounts all year long. Haskins said he would be willing to help the Register of Deeds at the event if she could have someone there to help sign up veterans. Koslowski suggested turning the old donation list over to Cathy Williquette so she could make contact with those businesses to see if they all wanted to sign up for the Honor Rewards program. Erickson will check with Williquette to see if she can have someone available on that day to sign up veterans.

10. Such Other Matters as Authorized by Law. None.

Erickson reported that Austin Straubel, whom the airport is named after, is going to be inducted into the Aviator Hall of Fame at EAA shortly. A commemorative display is going to be put together to be displayed at the airport. Once the display is done, Erickson will look into having a Subcommittee meeting out there so the group can see the display.

Pierce said that he had recently received a notice that the Milwaukee Air Show will be back next year and will include special performances by the Blue Angels on July 15 and 16, 2017.

Soderberg added that the United Patriotic Society will be holding a meeting on October 15.

Witkowski asked again if this group would be soliciting door prizes for Veterans Day or not and was informed that we would not be soliciting door prizes, but would promote the Honor Rewards program for veterans to receive year-round discounts.

11. Adjourn.

Motion made by Jim Haskins, seconded by Ed Koslowski to adjourn at 5:16 pm. Vote taken. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Respectfully submitted,

Therese Giannunzio
Recording Secretary